



(Staff Photo)

Frederick E. Nolting Jr.
Ex-Envoy to Viet Nam

Nolting to Aid Intelligence Special Study

By B. W. Mader

Frederick E. Nolting Jr. of Richmond, former ambassador to South Viet Nam, has been appointed to a special presidential study group formed to review United States intelligence activities.

In a telephone interview yesterday with The Times-Dispatch from his Washington office, Nolting said he has been "detailed by the State Department" to represent it on the recently assembled study panel, headed by John A. McCone, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) chief.

The study panel has been instructed to come up with substantive recommendations for the White House toward imposing greater efficiency and closer co-operation among CIA, military and other civilian intelligence agencies.

Dissatisfaction Unknown

It could not be learned whether the group's formation signaled dissatisfaction in the White House with the way United States intelligence work is being conducted around the globe.

For some time now, general displeasure

in some Washington circles about the rivalry and often unnecessary secrecy in contacts among the various intelligence arms of the government.

It is understood the new study group includes representatives of the various departments and branches to be scrutinized. The identities could not be learned.

"We have several people from various agencies involved in this study and report preparation," Nolting said. "I have been briefing up on this job for the past few days, and I really start my actual work now."

He estimated that the work would consume "several months," before the group can present its report and conclusions

to the White House. "I have no indication yet what my next assignment is to be," he added.

Since his return from South Viet Nam, Nolting served on the foreign service promotion panel for United States Information Agency (USIA) officers. Though a separate government agency, USIA for all practical purposes is an extension of the State Department.

Recognized as a brilliant diplomat, as well as occasionally a controversial one, Nolting was replaced in Saigon last June by Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., 1960 Republican vice presidential candidate and former ambassador to the United Nations.

There was considerable speculation, both in Saigon and in Washington, that Nolting was re-

called because of his close ties with the then-existing Ngo Dinh Diem government.

The Kennedy administration was becoming increasingly concerned at the time with the public unrest rooted in the Diem regime's oppressive stance.

It was felt in Washington that such conditions handicapped effective military efforts against Viet Cong (Communist Vietnamese) guerrillas, and consequently undermined the already precarious political climate in Southeast Asia.

Events in South Viet Nam were climaxed by a military coup about two months ago, in which both Diem and his influential brother were killed by their Vietnamese soldiers.

At the time of Lodge's appointment, the reason given for the change was that Nolting had already served two years in what was considered a hardship post, and was automatically due for a transfer.

Some observers, however, suggested that Nolting's recall was a natural result of Washington's hardening stance toward Saigon. Nolting had faithfully carried out instructions to form close relations with Diem, it was said, and the administration's new line could only put him in an embarrassing position.

At the time, Nolting offered no comment. Last November, however, in a speech before the English-Speaking Union in Charlottesville, he praised the dead Diem as a "very brave and very devoted upholder of the independence of his country," but also someone who was "not always wise."

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